



Across My Fifty Years

as a

Camp Director

by Louis M. Fleisher

*Written for and dedicated to the hundreds of
fine boys who were my camp family over
the many years and who are now grown to
man's estate with families of their own.*

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ACROSS MY FIFTY YEARS AS A CAMP DIRECTOR

This is not in any sense to be a history of THE KENNEBEC CAMPS since their beginning in 1907, but rather a patch work of memories and bits of camp philosophy, of people and events that have enriched my life over the fifty odd years I have been engaged in organized camping.

Before the turn of the century my parents had heard of Dr. Henderson who had just moved his camp for boys from Milford in the Pennsylvania Poconos to Chesham, N. H. I spent my twelfth and thirteenth summer there. That is where my career in camping began. C. Hanford Henderson was a fine educator and he was also an esthete and a lover of all things beautiful. Simple as Marienfeld of necessity was, compared to the elaborate developments of today, no camp, I have seen, was any more beautiful and few were kept as clean and orderly. I have felt strongly ever since that with desired emphasis on simplicity, the "roughing it" in camping should be confined to the trips and living in the woods and that most camps can be criticized for bad housekeeping. Dr. Henderson by his presence emphasized that we were gentlemen and that camping did not entail crudity. His own manners were intuitively beautiful and his example was persuasive.

Despite the passing of so many years, I have some memories of my camper days that I am sure have strongly influenced my own camp direction. We lived eight to a tent in upper and lower bunk beds, but I have no use for double deckers. Let them remain in ship cabins where elbow room must be sacrificed. We all had instruction, tutoring in music, art and science, but little if any actual athletic coaching, swimming or camping-out.

But Marienfeld had a fully professional staff of teachers. It was that above everything that made Marienfeld a worthwhile experience - a point I will have occasion to emphasize again and again. I do recall much interest in track and field events and that I developed a little skill in pole vaulting, using a clothes pole to get over the bar. It gave my tent leader a job in extracting the splinters I got in my hands from the rough pole. The camp was beautifully located on top of a hill with a view. It was a long, hot discouraging climb to and from the lake that looked so pretty in its woodland setting as seen from the hilltop. I do not think children are greatly interested or impressed by the outlook from their bunks and I would never pick a camp site distant from the all important swimming area. I do not recommend sleeping quarters on the shore itself. For younger children especially there is the danger of night walking; also it increases temptation on hot nights of an unauthorized midnight dip.

I think Marienfeld did furnish a few row boats, but I was one of the more fortunate boys whose indulgent parents furnished us with a canoe at their own expense. Mine was a lovely blue and I loved it like a living pet. It started an enthusiasm for this craft of Indian origin that I still feel in this day of outboards and Cris Crafts.

Following my summers as a camper at Marienfeld with Dr. Henderson, I camped with various groups of friends in the Adirondacks including canoe trips through the Fulton Chain and a summer tenting on Deer Island in Lake Placid. From there I learned the adventurous pleasure of mountain climbing and have always felt it should be made a part of an organized camping program.

Then, following my graduation from college and my second year in the law school, I was a counsellor in one of the earliest organized boys camps in Maine. Our faculty consisted of a director, who was strictly a Business Man on the make, and six counsellors for eighty boys. The staff included a medical student, the director's brother-in-law. I think his chief qualification was a set of obstetrical instruments given him by our director on graduation.

I know we all pitched in and amongst other things did a lot of first aid work. The staff lived in 3 tents, separate from the boys, at the end of the tent street and led a merry life. But it was a strong and competent staff and I learned a lot both good and bad about camping and child guidance. I introduced some canoe trips and camping-out into the program. My knowledge gained in the chain of lakes of this region was helpful when I began sending out trips from my own camp from the neighboring Belgrade Lake Country. Late in the summer I had a visit from a couple of friends that was to result directly in starting my own camp the subsequent summer. They had asked me what I thought of the camp. I replied that it left much to be desired in top direction and despite this it was so successful that I wondered what a really well directed camp might do. After I returned from a post-season canoe trip down the West Branch of the Penobscot, my friends suggested that together we should start a camp of our own.

I protested my inexperience and lack of professional training as an educator. To their very persuasive arguments I countered with a condition which I thought would end the project. I said we might risk it if we secured Metzenthin as our head counsellor. Metzenthin had been all American quarterback from Columbia and had been coaching football and teaching high school English. He had been the strong arm of our camp staff the past summer -

mature, with a personality appealing to boys. However, from what he had told me of his future plans I was pretty sure he was not interested. It was a good out. But after a week my friends returned with the surprising news that he was interested and receptive.

So our enterprise was launched and now we had to secure campers, a location and a staff. My associate was my dearest boyhood friend, Charles Fox, who later served Philadelphia as an eminent District Attorney. He was very popular and with his contacts in many cities we had little difficulty in recruiting forty-eight campers for our first season. Even our first year we had enrollments from New York, Boston, Pittsburgh, Cleveland, Cincinnati and Chicago, in addition to Philadelphia, our home town.

The bringing together of children from many sections seems very desirable if possible. Kennebec happily has been able to assign quotas to the centers from which most of our campers come so as to prevent a metropolis, like N. Y. or Philadelphia to complete our limited enrollment. Of course this has meant a lot more travelling to meet prospects and keep contacts. But that in itself, makes for interesting experiences and friendships. We always like to have our boys form groups from different home cities. Aside from the broadening outlook, this has proved of great practical value to our boys. As they have moved and travelled in later years they have quickly found friends they had known from camp.

But now it was also necessary to find a site for our camp, and then build it in time for summer's opening date. With my love of the Adirondack lakes, I immediately started a search in that lovely region. I combed it from Schroon Lake to Star Lake but returned without finding the combination of land and water for which I was looking. There was scenery aplenty, but not ample terrain for playing fields in close proximity to the lake shore and within a price range we could afford.

Upon my return from this fruitless trip I was met with the news that our head master Metzenthin, upon whose help I had conditioned my proceeding, had resigned and all the eloquence of my partner had been unavailing. I argued that without him, and with no suitable camp site in hand, we must abandon our enterprise.

It happened that the following Saturday Penn and Michigan were scheduled to play football in Philadelphia. In going over the list of players on the Michigan team, I was struck with an unusual name, Eber Kanaga. "Why, that must be my much loved and admired bunk leader at Marienfeld", I exclaimed.

I went to see him when the squad came to town. I told him how near I had come to starting a camp of my own. He was excitedly interested in our plans, and before he returned to Ann Arbor had agreed to replace Metzenthin on our staff.

Kanaga was an outstanding director of physical education who, after years in school work, had gone back to study Medicine, his first love. His background, experience and maturity were invaluable in setting up our camp program, balanced between directed activity and free time; between sports and wood craft; social interests and craft skills. Kanaga was a beautifully built man with fine physical coordination. He was a native of the Northern Michigan peninsula, of part Scandinavian parentage, and a member of an Indian tribe. He shared my love of the canoe on inland waters. Some of my happiest recollections are as bowman to his stern paddle or setting pole. A canoe in his hands became a living thing. We set a record of paddling around the circle of the Belgrade Lakes, including the carries, between sunrise and sunset, and challenged any of our campers or staff to equal it. Then, after the end of the season, four of us in two canoes made the famous Allagash trip with its many big lakes, fast river and unbroken woodland wilderness. This is a trip that has become a climax to the camping trip program of many of the camps in Maine. It should not be missed by any canoe enthusiast. Ours certainly was one of the merriest as well as most unorthodox descents down those waters. In our quartet was a wild Irishman, McDonough. He had been a great full back at Swarthmore, and as nice a giant as you could find. He had been wonderfully tender with our littlest boys all summer. Once when my pole had stuck and held fast in bottom rocks, as I pushed the canoe around a swirl of water, it had lifted me clean out of the stern of my canoe, which went down the current without me. McDonough suddenly sensing a change of balance and turning saw me yards behind standing waist deep in the river, shouted "Lou, why did you jump", and then he crashed. His idea of the way to run the Rankin Rapids was to stride the bow, stark naked with a leg stretched out in front of each side of the canoe to shove off from the rocks which threatened to the right and left of the channel. Each kick was accompanied with a mighty shout of glee. None of us had any previous knowledge of the course to follow other than some maps showing the streams and lakes, but no notes of portages or where to put in or take out. So when we were puzzled where to make Mud Pond from Umbazooksis, and while we were studying the lay of the land and debating alternate routes, a canoe with a single paddler came down the lake - obviously a woodsman who knew his way. When we asked him for directions, he countered by asking who was the registered guide in our party. He was a state ranger on patrol.

Maine requires parties who build fires in its wild lands to be in charge of a licensed guide. He must be a resident of the state and recommended as qualified. Aside from the safety precaution, this is to protect the State from costly forest fires caused by incompetent picnic campers. To carry out our program of trips into the North Woods we now always include a goodly number of men from the schools in Maine on our Camp staff, for whom we secure guide licenses. But, on this trip none of us had secured such a license, and the warden suggested we go back to Greenville, whither he was bound, to face charges. We held a council and explained that we preferred to have him go on with us to our trip's destination at Fort Kent on the St. John River, the Canadian boundary.

Then it was time to make camp for the night. We had the warden as our guest, and after a fine dinner we sat around our fire and swapped yarns long after the stars rode high. The superlative camping skill of Kanaga and the Irish blarney of McDonough worked their charms. When we broke camp in the morning we were all pals. Our warden regretted he could not continue down the Allagash with us. He gave good directions and wrote out a temporary license just in case we ran into some other warden along the way. We made it fine, but such a trip has its dangers and to take a party of children through the big woods by trail or canoe imposes a great responsibility. I learned my respect for them then. It has only increased with time. Leadership must be of the best. The tragic loss of drowning from an upset canoe from a camping party recently emphasizes the need for judgment when it is safer to stay wind bound on shore than risk swamping in the storm-tossed waters of a lake, or in rapids of a stream too fast for inexperienced canoeemen.

But I have gotten way ahead of my story. We had solved the problem of leadership, but still had not found a site for our camp for which we had started recruiting. Now I had to wait 'til Christmas vacation from my law studies, and it was winter. My next exploration took me to the Belgrade Lakes in Maine. After being snow bound in a farm house, I located a tract on the shore of North Pond. We got out a little prospectus, and in it described this location extolling the beautiful view it had of Mt. Blue. Then Fox went up to complete our deal. He was told about the Watson tract on Neighboring Salmon Lake. He arrived after dark and went over the fields and out on to the frozen lake with old man Watson on snow shoes in full moonlight, and decided then and there it was the spot for us. I do not recommend this romantic approach as a scientific way of camp site selection, but we have never regretted our choice. Of course, we do not have a view of Mt. Blue - full or otherwise.

Our terrain was mostly open pasture fields with a fine rock and sand shore. It was bare of trees except for a fringe along the shore. It faced a beautiful unbroken forest across the lake, but our own tract, ideal for buildings and play fields, has required much landscaping, tree planting and beautifying. It takes time, but now we have a fine pine stand of my planting 25 years ago and many shade trees and they are just where we want them.

It seems that nowadays any one wishing to start a camp looks for a ready built plant located by a former owner. This is especially true of private profit enterprises, for I have helped locate a number of institutional camps, Boy Scout etc. where we have bought land, cleared and built from scratch.

I have also observed that the buildings in organization camps, mess halls, assembly halls and shops - tho not the living quarters - are far more elaborate and costly than even the most expensive private camps. They must be impression creating to justify the large capital funds donated by the public. It is quite the reverse, however, when it comes to programs, staff, activity facilities and play equipment.

It has been my belief from the start, which the passing years have strengthened, that all camps should remain as simple, natural and primitive as possible, and still provide the necessary adequate facilities and comforts. I have no use for the country club atmosphere I have found in many of the most expensive camps, which depend on making a hit with visiting parents.

When Kennebec was started back in 1906, there were but a handful of operating children's summer camps in the East. I visited six or seven and was impressed by the two great "Y" camps, Becket on Lake George in New York, and Dudley in Massachusetts. So there was no question of walking into somebody's discarded shoes. My next big job was to lay out and build my camp. With my new law degree in my pocket, I rushed North with barely a month to go. Using carpenters rather than builders from the nearby town, we slapped up some board structures that somehow performed remarkably well until replaced one by one over the years. With the exception of a little storage shack removed from its original location, not a single structure of the original buildings remains. It amuses me when some old campers drop in for a visit, as many do, to have them tell me how well they remember camp and how little has changed. Well, the old spirit and atmosphere are happily still the same.

During the last pre season month, while watching the progress of our building, and the leveling of a ball diamond and

tennis court, I lived in the old Salmon Lake House whose proprietor was a poet of local fame, his ode "When the fish begin to bite", was on a par for local color with his inn. After our supper the guests, all fishing sports, would sit around the open log fire and tell of their day's catch, and hear old Spaulding tell of the famous fish of yesteryear. I have never been a fishing enthusiast, but I had a boat to make the trip to camp, and pretty soon I rigged a sail and spent free time cruising the lake. One of the carpenters had a teen-age daughter, a lively miss who sometimes came out with her father, and without much persuasion acted as my crew. Despite the anxiety of the job, and considerable apprehension for what lay ahead, it was a pleasant lovely month of June.

Our assembly hall was a four square box with a fireplace at one end and two rows of board seats behind a low rail around three sides. The center like a cockpit was a cleared floor for action. In general effect, it resembled the Quaker Meeting in downtown Philadelphia which I had attended as a school boy. Our first lighting was from kerosene lamps in brackets on the walls. Civilization's advance might be measured by our changes in lighting. The lamps, nasty smelly things, requiring constant wick trimming and cleaning, and were shortly succeeded by an acetylene gas system. It operated from a shed by the lake with water on carbide, and the white slag made a point of interest on the shore. The light was brilliant but erratic, with lights going up and down, and sometimes out at critical moments because of the varying pressure. This was followed by a pressure gasoline system using incandescent mantles and a hand pressure pump. This lasted until the modern age caught up with us, and we ran a pole line into the property and secured electric power. Even now, it is hard to remember to what an extent this revolutionized our chores. Even a gasoline water pump requires an electric spark. It took squad work to hand pump water into a storage tank. Washing and tooth brushing were part of morning setting up drill; refrigeration depended on dragging huge slabs of ice from the saw dust shed to the overhead ice rack in the cooler.

If, as I contend, one of the major objectives of bringing boys and girls into camp environment is to emphasize simple self-reliant living as a balance from the gadgets and softening influences of our push button age, then camp people are faced with the dilemma of how far these so-called advances of civilization are to be introduced. For example, it is hard to explain why you should not have electric lights in sleeping cabins, and even space heaters when all other buildings are wired. I feel sure that having had my campers retire by flash light tended to speed the process, reduce after-taps activity, and increase the feeling of its being really a camp. I do not think any kind of dormitory system has any place in a camp.

I had an illustration of how dependent even our back woods communities are on furnished power when hurricanes knocked out all power lines. Fortunately, the big winds came just after the close of the season. But my farmer neighbors were paralyzed - no lights, no refrigeration, no water from their wells, no gas for their cars. A more backward community, such as this was in the days when Kennebec started, would have been disturbed only as long as it took the men, all skilled axemen, to clear the roads of fallen trees. Is it not the function of our camps to restore this self-sufficiency and ability to survive crises?

Our first assembly, with the audience seated around an open center, would seem to have pre-dated the "Theatre in the Round". It was admirable, and this form was much recommended by Ernest Seton Thompson and his Woodcraft League as an indoor council ring. Our new and far more elaborate assembly halls and theatres have not followed this plan, but I think that has been a real loss.

Around two sides of the assembly building ran a wide porch. This was the dining hall. It was connected by a covered walk with a kitchen. Long tables were fastened at one end to the porch railing, and left a serving aisle on the building side. Long benches provided seating. If the meat was tough, look out for an elbow in the ribs from the guy carving away on your left. The tables were covered with oilcloth tacked to the sides of the tables and dropping below on each side. The trick was to point out something of interest on the lake and while your neighbor was gazing out to sea, you made a trough of the hanging oilcloth into which you poured a handy liquid. It would funnel nicely into his lap. I still think good table manners and etiquette marks a gentleman even in camp. I fear the comments on their son's table manners as they have come to me in counselors' reports would bring a tinge of red to many mothers' cheeks. Still, I hold that a camp community should evolve a joyous free atmosphere - as free from reproof and restraint as possible. There are limits, and it is not difficult to pick out children who come from homes of refined culture with habitual consideration for others. Also, generally you can tell the child where parents have been too busy or occupied with society and worldly affairs and left their offspring to the care of servants.

One of the sure indexes of this is the youngster who has become accustomed to getting his food by self service directly from the refrigerator. His tastes are very fixed, and how he does hate vegetables, fish, liver and a balanced diet. Snacks are his conception of a meal. Amongst others, I will never forget a little little fellow from Park Avenue, New York, who would eat nothing

but bread and peanut butter washed down with many glasses of milk, and this, if permitted, three times a day.

When a separate and beautiful dining hall, and a very efficient food plant, was added to the growing camp, round tables to seat eight were standardized, with regular comfortable dining room chairs. Tilting these back from the table is a major offense. One thing we omitted in building was sound proofing. It would be a blessed relief. Also, there is no need for an impressive fireplace, which is found in many fine camp mess halls, but never used.

The table should accommodate a section or squad of campers of the number standardized in the camp, with its leader. This group had best maintain its identity through the season as a family unit. Of course the unit breaks up for activities and play, even as members of a family separate. But they come home to a secure background and familiar personal equation at table and in their cabin or section group. A family atmosphere at table seems very desirable.

Frequently I have been asked if it would not add variety and interest to have the table groups shift frequently. That is possible, but the disadvantages outweigh it.

It is habitual for the leader of each table group to claim that his bunch has the very worst behavior and disgusting eating habits. The men do occasionally shift to other tables. Then they are happy to come back to their own. Bad as they are, they are still a known quantity. It must be each summer that I have been asked at a morning breakfast staff meeting whether a camper must eat everything that is served, and what to do about the little underweight who does not eat, and the big fatty who stuffs himself? I hold that food should never be made a problem. It is a blessing, and meals should be happy social gatherings. It is very upsetting to see, as I frequently have, a child sitting at the table after the rest have finished their meal, with tears dripping into the dish he has been told he must finish before he can leave. Surely the psychological block this can create outweighs any good that food can do. The best procedure is first never to overload the plate, and persuade the child to try at least a sample. Then at some time, away from the table, discuss with him the importance of various food elements to build strong bodies. The example of the counselor in rejecting or commenting adversely on a dish is disastrous. "Please", I say to them, "bring your complaints directly to me or the person responsible." I remember a summer when any cheese preparation was greeted with a gesture of noses being held because a popular counselor declared he could not stand

the smell, and for a long time no pudding whatsoever could be served because the then head counselor would wave the dish away with a gesture of dislike.

And now we have allergies. There were no allergies back in the days when these camps began. True some foods did not agree too well with some little people, and some had a lot of runny noses, and there was hay fever. Now it is an unusual and rare doctor's pre-season report that does not indicate an allergy. The line up for periodic inoculations resembles induction into the army. At least, I seldom am asked any more if our region is free of golden rod or rag weed.

I have wondered what it possibly does to us to have our bodies shot full of serums and foreign organic bodies. Apparently these marvelous machines of ours take care of a lot. Do these inoculations possibly contribute to future trouble as well as defend against present threats? How long before the race develops total immunity to all prevalent diseases? We know that even now normal diseases of childhood like measles are a minor illness, altho it decimated the Indian tribes, who suffered frightful epidemics when exposed by the white pioneers. Even now I discourage the use of antibiotics by our young staff doctors, unless their need is clearly indicated.

As soon as the last of our campers has finished breakfast we gather our faculty each morning for a round table discussion of the day's program and our campers' problems. Until our staff grew too large and the consequent loss of time excessive, I served them their breakfast coffee at the meeting. It was very pleasant and we made it a social function with an electric percolator on the table and a special coffee service. I feel we lost something unusual and pleasant when we started serving their coffee at the table. But, the gathering still is an important way of acquainting all the staff of what problems individuals face and a great help in keeping the director in touch with his community.

Each season I use an early faculty meeting to point out that there is no necessary connection between "discipline" and "punishment." Even the graduates of our teachers colleges with class room experience are often at a loss to handle so called problems of discipline in their group. Discipline is the acceptance of behavior patterns in conformity with the accepted conduct of the community, and is best taught by fellow campers and by admonition and example. Rewards and punishment comes largely through the approval or rejection by the group, both campers and leaders. However, one of the questions most frequently asked by a new counsellor is how we handle disobedience and infraction

of rules. "Wherever possible", I say, "let the punishment fit the crime" - always be sure it is deserved, understood and tempered with mercy. Never punish to satisfy anger. If possible discuss the situation both before and after and draw the sting of resentment. We have faced the situation where a camper feels he has been punished solely because the counsellor did not like him or was working off a grudge of his own or for his own selfish interest. I point out that if the punishment is to deprive the child of his dessert, for instance, because of misbehavior at table, his portion must never be eaten by any one else at the table. Or if he is under house arrest in his cabin, the penalty should never extend over normal meal times or be for a protracted period.

With all of the leaders at the post breakfast counsellors meeting and the campers presumably busy with their housekeeping chores, we did run into problems of lack of supervision. Frequently sounds of conflict would hasten our adjournment or the hurried departure of the senior officer of the day. Now the officer of the day and the man who had served, in rotation, the preceding day, remained with the campers. They are subsequently briefed as to what had been discussed at the meeting. This has worked out well.

Fifty years ago it was taken for granted that if you went camping you slept in a tent. We have continued the tent quadrangle altho there are few long term camps that still use canvas. As a summer shelter, properly erected on a platform, and in the open, a tent has real merit. From a camper's viewpoint it means a smaller unit of occupants, a real outdoors' shelter, as the four walls can be rolled up, a good hide-away, as there is no window or door when the flaps are buttoned down. A tent is less desirable for the owner-director. The wear and tear and replacement far exceeds that of a cabin, and the need to have canvas bone dry for storage makes for anxious consideration of weather predictions about closing time. Then too, a bare tent platform is no place to store beds, or contents, between seasons. But our boys have begged us not to replace tents with cabins.

Water, toilet facilities or closets, cannot be installed in tents. Fifty odd years ago boys (there were no girls' camps then) started older than now. When I began enrolling younger children it became desirable to build cabins and provide facilities. Still there is very little privacy in cabin living - it would be actually dangerous to put locks on doors and the inhabitants are about as private as the denizens in the proverbial fish bowl. I do not think many camp people realize how great an adjustment is required by a child who has never over-nighted away from home. It came to me forcibly when the mother of a Baltimore boy told

me she had difficulty in getting the real reason for her boy's hesitation to return, following what had seemed a happy first camp summer. Johnny and I had a good talk. I had him tell me about his trouble to accept the free wheeling of the crowd, all of them his friends. I assured him I understood and that in a greater or lesser degree most people had to meet the same problem, but as he would go on into school, athletic and army situations, it was important to accept group familiarity. I could help him by making available the counselors' facilities in their Lodge when he felt embarrassed. With this he was anxious to return, and actually has never availed himself or apparently needed special consideration. This problem I found was much more evident where there was a single child than where there were brothers and sisters. That camps help teach adaptation to a community life with all its give and take - teasing and clashing personalities is an important contribution to maturity.

If I built camp cabins today, I would do better than what was done. I would arrange an alcove with a low partition for the counselor's bed, and give him room for paper work. I would provide more hanging space for bath robes, rain coats and towels. But two features I have not found in other camps I would retain: the box trunks on racks by each cot to store belongings. This permits sweeping the floor, and when closed provides a table top. It also solves trunk storage, and our shutters drop instead of being hinged at the top to give maximum light.

I have never decided whether it is better to permit a cabin group to continue as a unit summer after summer, if they request it, or to persuade them to broaden friendships by new associations. I have seen it work both ways. The first season I necessarily made up section groups with little to guide me beyond age and home town. If possible, I place at least one camper of previous acquaintance together. In subsequent seasons I have request lists which require careful consideration - often much diplomacy in affecting desired changes. Proper combination and balance can make or break the summer for the entire group. I look back and find many squads that became so integrated that I never think of any of its individuals without having the others of the team come to mind. In most instances these cliques continued right into adult life, and exist today, and invariably they have included fellows from widely separated localities and vastly different temperaments.

What should one do with the unpopular child that no group wants? Better to put them all in one cabin to concentrate misery or scatter them, one to a group all around? No answer to that one either. My best solution generally was to consider what problem

produced unpopularity, and place with a counselor as his special responsibility, to help the child in his adjustment.

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Leadership in camping, like in everything that has to do with people, big or little, is the most important ingredient. There is no substitute for it. Nothing takes its place. Through the long years, it has been my boast - "Give me my trained and devoted staff and I can run a successful camp in the Sahara." I know some camps with far more elaborate buildings and equipment where I would not enroll my dog. In the early days it was not too difficult to make selection. Then training and indoctrinization and the weeding out process did the rest. The great training schools for physical educators like Springfield Y. M. C. A. College were anxious to give their students training. A letter to the dean would provide me with a fine line-up from which to choose by interview. Then members of the staff would spread the gospel and bring friends they felt measured up to our high standards. Many of these men have remained to consider their Kennebec connection a most important event in their lives. Considering that this is only a two months' occupation out of the year, their continued interest and devotion is fabulous. Many of our faculty have returned year after year from boys fresh out of school through marriage, and have had their sons as campers, as assistants, and finally as counselors as enthusiastic as their fathers. Little in life has been as rewarding as my dear friendships with these men and their families.

Kanaga was a wonderful first head master. Unfortunately, he could only give us two seasons. When he graduated in medicine he moved to the apple country of Oregon out west, and practiced in a newly settled region until his recent death.

My next choice was a sad one - a big fellow from the coal regions of Pennsylvania who had been in law school with me and a football star. He did well enough as a counselor under Kanaga, but was utterly sedentary as program director and in charge of staff. His greatest prowess was exhibited at meal time. In a long line of subsequent trencher men, he would still rate in my books. At the end of that summer, as our train pulled into Broad Street Station, he was met with a warrant sworn out by a lady he'd done wrong, happily with no camp connection.

A wonderful fellow whom everyone called Morey succeeded him. He had about everything needed for a boy's leader - presence, athletic ability, decision, personality. He was my life long devoted friend. During the first war we met by accident in France

when we were both attending an advance officers' training course, and bunked together joyously. He held the big job at camp until his success at the top of one of New York's leading insurance agencies took all his time.

During Morey's administration we staged our one and only big top circus. It was complete with acrobats, animal acts (hilariously funny), clowns, a side show, pink lemonade, and a rodeo in which I participated. My father had horses, and I was put astride before my legs were long enough for stirrups. I included riding as a regular and compulsory camp activity. Rising costs forced it to become, at a later date, our only elective extra. But I strongly felt that it was part of a gentleman's education to learn to ride. That was before every child knew how to drive a car before the age of sixteen. It took a doctor's certificate for a camper to skip his riding lessons. At one time we had a stable of eighteen saddlers - and a ring for instruction. At first, we promoted our advanced squad to the dirt roads of our area. When the roads were all macadamized, I negotiated for lovely bridle paths over the fields and through the woods with our neighbors. I loved the breakfast rides we took at dawn to an adult camp some five miles distant on another lake.

My own riding had included a fine rough riding class for many years. It was ably directed by Jim Littlefield. His wife did the annual children's Christmas ballet at the Philadelphia Academy of Music. His daughter Catherine became a well known ballerina.

For some years my rodeo group did bareback ring riding - drilling, mounting at various gaits, tandem and picking things off the ground. Then we started indoor polo and met teams from West Point and other cities.

School riding was slow in the summer, so I signed up Jim to direct our program at Camp. He emphasized the difference between learning to sit on a horse and equitation. A dance show at camp staged by Catherine and her sister, age twelve and ten, was a dubious success. The campers preferred a lively boxing match. But after Catherine became a ballerina of note they could brag of their camp contact with so glamorous a personality.

My associates, first Charley Fox and then Brod Friedman, were as fond of riding as was I. Back in the city we rode regularly over the superb bridle paths in Fairmount Park. Some of our biggest decisions were reached during these saddle sessions. A jogging trot stimulates the flow of blood to the brain and increases imagination and mental activity. I would recommend strongly

this type of directors' meeting in place of a stuffy smoke filled boardroom with the participants sunk in their upholstered chairs in somnolent repose.

It was also my colleague Fox who developed our long horseback trips. Under him they grew into real safaries, whose weeks' long preparation turned camp upside down. They formed part of our regular camping-out program. Every boy in our Senior Camp goes on a different one each season. The horseback trip early in August lasted from ten to twelve days, and the route was scouted in advance with reservations for the overnight stops, feed depots for the horses, and an interest point as an objective. The lucky boys selected for this excursion were outfitted with uniforms, including ten-gallon hats, kerchiefs and gloves, all very tidy and smart. At last on departure our entire camp turned out at dawn to watch the inevitable confusion of getting under way. For there always were last minute hilarious episodes. Like the time Charles decided there should be pack horses instead of a wagon to carry the camp dunnage. But this was not out west, and our horses were unfamiliar to diamond hitches, and all the equipment loaded on their back landed in a mess on the ball diamond. The amount of equipment for the overnight stands grew more elaborate each trip. When we became motorized, a platform truck was added to leap frog the column and set up the camp for each day's march. As two campers travelled on the truck besides the extra staff as driver, it made it possible for each camper to have a non-riding day. When the squad rode into camp, tired and dirty from a long day in the saddle, the camper's first duty was to his mount. After unsaddling, he was ridden bareback to the water. This inevitably led to many a ducking and plenty of excitement, as it was likely the horses would want to roll in the drink. Then they would cut up on the gallop back to the picket line. There were plenty of breathtaking episodes, and looking back, I still wonder we escaped serious accidents. We did have some boys who were thrown in the ring, and by horses they failed to control on the road. They were what I call permissible accidents normally incident to the sport, for we took all possible precautions. It is a fact that riding in both boys' and girls' camps is rated an extra hazardous sport. The liability Insurance rate for camps having horses is extremely high. Aside from a few slight concussions and a twisted ankle, we did exceptionally well. It is a good rule that if possible a thrown rider must remount and ride, to prevent any fear fixation. We did have some campers who were afraid of horses, in the saddle or off. It is always dangerous to generalize, but it seemed this was more common in children from the mid-western cities, like Cleveland and Cincinnati. Just as many of our best swimmers seemed to originate in Baltimore. I remember a youngster whose parents were most anxious to have Johnny learn to ride; I think

they had a farm in the country and horses. Johnny was really afraid. The thought of the ordeal in the ring even bothered his sleep. Instead of forcing him to mount a horse I took him into the stable with me daily, where we got acquainted with a lovely mare, feeding, petting and eventually even grooming. It worked, and before the season was over he was enthusiastic and one of our most accomplished riders. When Charles Fox organized the trips, it became a tradition that the last evening's meal should be a full fledged banquet. The final camp site naturally would be back near home, and the makings would be brought out by the specially invited v. i. p. guests. It was the occasion for luscious outdoor cookery stimulated by much rivalry, followed by toasts, songs and stunts. All of us who participated will remember these nights under the stars - unfortunately they did not always shine. But canvas shelter took care of the wet ones. Then after a short sleep the boys remounted to ride into camp and arouse the stay-at-homes before daybreak or the bugle call.

After Jim Littlefield, I had a succession of varied riding masters, both good and bad, but all colourful. Amongst them I remember a specimen from Brooklyn who taught at Durland's Riding Academy off Central Park. He taught the campers a brand new repertory of four letter words. His brief tenure was followed by a real gentleman, General Harmon, a West Pointer, retired, who left us for distinguished service in the Second War. The last chapter of our riding was under a school man, a Vice Principal in a large suburban high school. He was a fine executive and kept a good stable. His teaching may have erred by being over cautious and on the conservative side. Under him we had an annual horse show with amusing games; egg and spoon races, pajama rides, and also form demonstrations.

About this time intercamp activities between boy and girl camps were sponsored. It seems the girls were most anxious for dances and parties - Kennebec was much solicited, but the boys were not enthusiastic, and I feel it has many potential dangers. But I do think an intercamp non-competitive horse show has possibilities. I invited a girls' camp that had horses to join in putting one on. I still regret that it was never attempted.

I feel much disappointment that riding is no longer a camp activity, and the once so busy stable now only serves as a storage place for some of our trucks. Being devoted to horses, we made every effort to continue the sport, even heavily subsidizing it against the steeply rising cost. It was a losing battle. Except for a few enthusiasts, interest fell off from season to season. There were too many unavoidable program conflicts. Boys who were signed up with paid up rides begged off when they had to report

for team practice or a game. Arbitrarily forcing them to ride was a bad alternative. I concluded that if less than fifteen per cent of our campers expressed interest, the odds were too great, and the stable doors stayed closed.

I think riding generally continues more popular in girls' camps. Also many children, both boys and girls, enjoy a break in their summers at organized camps by spending one or more seasons at a Western ranch. I strongly approve of this.

We have tried to make our camp summers varied and progressive from season to season, but it may be interesting and more stimulating to vary the succession of camp summers with a break. A season spent at a ranch, a trip with the family abroad, or even a summer at school. Though it seemed against interest, I have often advised and endorsed it. It has worked out well, and we frequently get an enthusiastic camper returning the summer following. However, I have little use for European tours, especially the usual coed variety, for teen-agers. Venus de Milo or Mona Lisa can hardly compete with the cuties at Monte Carlo or the Lido. Sightseeing is no substitute for healthy active sports at that age. The culture of Europe can be better appreciated beyond the ages for organized camping. I have seen several of my nicest boys return from such a tour so sophisticated they seemed many years beyond their age and were craving new excitement and sophisticated adventures.

* * *

I am not sure whether our first invitation intercamp all sport tournament was started the first season, or very shortly thereafter. It was held at Poland Springs, the resort famous for its bottled water. At that time the hotel was owned and managed by the bearded Riker brothers - rather austere and formidable New Englanders. I went down to beard them in their den. I wanted use of their tennis courts, fields and swimming facilities. They were interested but not cordial. I ended by securing a permit with limitations. We could camp on designated fields, play a tournament, but must give assurance that we would not visit the hotel or contaminate their lake. In the many years since then I know many of the parents have paid handsomely for their entertainment there, and the Rikers themselves died heavily indebted to the banks.

The following season Moriarity made the arrangements. We met on the Lewiston fair grounds. We used the harness-racing track for our running races, and Bates College athletic facilities - the actual encampments were on the fair grounds. Next year our

Meeting was attaining stature, and we moved to the commons in front of the State Capitol in Augusta. We had the Governor in the reviewing stand. Two Cleveland brothers who were exceptional boy athletes piled up points, and assured us the Meet. With that, these all-sport Camp Olympics ended.

Intercamp competition in baseball, swimming, tennis, and lately in sailing, and even photography are of immense importance to the American boy. I cannot envisage a summer in camp without it for the older, competitive-minded camper. Isn't life competitive? And, if you enter a sport or play a game, it is wrong training not to enter to win. Of course, that does not exclude good sportsmanship or knowing both how to win and lose gracefully. But I have no use for the defeatist spirit "play for fun, the game's the thing - it does not matter who wins". I say it does very much matter to at least at least try one's hardest not to lose. I have always insisted on the best coaching obtainable, on faithful practice, on team spirit. There was a period when our senior swimming teams were losing with great regularity and equal nonchalance, and the men responsible said it did not matter - they were enjoying the sport. So I sent the coach of my juniors to take charge and coach them. He was a hard competitor and he expected the boys to win, and they did, and have ever since. The important thing is not to glorify the winner as a boy hero. When the match is over there should be no victory celebration and in defeat no alibi. And I hate medals, trophy cups and banners, even though the assembly hall in Senior Camp is full of them.

With the advent of so-called modern education where the child is supposed to call the shots, so as not to block development of personality, we heard a great deal about a non-directed program, free from any formal organization. A newly established camp in our region, our nearest neighbor, became very aggressive for enrollments, advising parents that Kennebec was too competitive, suited only for outstanding performers. The experience of their campers was boredom and a wasted summer. Now this same camp enters teams in all our open meets and stages an invitation Swimming Meet, the toughest competition our boys face.

There is another facet to good instruction and form in sports; the social aspect. Our boys not only play tennis or swim, or sail a boat well, they do it in beautiful form. They come back and tell me frequently how the competence gained has opened doors in college, country club and resorts. An American is sport loving, and we all play games, increasingly so with our ever increasing leisure.

* * *

I have delayed telling where I lost the association of my dearest friend and associate, Charles Fox, who really started me on this camping career. We were also briefly associated in the practice of law. It was easy to share the first few seasons, each being in residence for a month with an overlap and combined closing. Charles and I separated when I took a position in a Trust Company and he became an Assistant District Attorney. Also, his private practice increased 'til he came to me at the end of a fine camp season with the upsetting proposition that he would turn over his interest to me on most advantageous terms. But where was I to find an associate to compare? Fox was a born boys' leader; he generated sympathy and enthusiasm. He was not a very good camper and lacked my background in that and educational administration which I had been studying. But he had a gift of organization and influencing people, young and old. So we made a team. He fortunately continued to maintain his own home on our Belgrade Lake, always a point of interest for our campers. Much of his vacation time was spent in camp. This continued until his lamented death, and the summers during the first war when I was in service in Europe he resumed direction pending my demobilization, like the great friend he was. He was a great book man. He believed that the influence of good books was an inspiration in forming the character of young people. In his will he left a handsome bequest for a camp library. Dedicated to his memory we built a lovely new headquarters' lodge. Overlooking the lake, it contains a quiet reading room lined with book shelves. It's restful atmosphere and lovely outlook, over the water, draws the boy who wants to escape for a bit from the more active and busy group life. I think every camp should have a quiet spot apart.

* * *

When President Wilson led us into the World War, we organized camp as a cadet corps. We secured two officers with marvelous military backgrounds - one from The New York Military Academy, the other an Annapolis graduate who had resigned from naval service to enter teaching. A part of every morning was given over to the manual of arms. We drilled with dummy wooden guns. We had close and open formation drills, parades and war games. These extended over considerable territory, and on through the night. Sentries were posted, and I still in memory hear "Officer of the guard - post number one" resound in a frightened youngster's falsetto. We developed a fine drum and bugle corps. We had a diminutive drum major, a member of a prominent Atlanta family, who strutted his stuff, proud as a peacock. Then I was commissioned, and went over, and missed the second season of a military camp, to return just before the close of the 1919 season. I had a greater thrill reviewing the muster to welcome

me home than my participation in the pass in review for General "Black Jack" Pershing in Trier, Germany.

I think our boys really enjoyed the experience, and of course it fitted the times, but I felt then, and my observation of strictly military schools and camps, even the best, like Culver and Valley Forge, confirms my dislike for the repressive discipline, and even more the fostering of class consciousness which military establishments seem always to engender.

The effect on camps of War number two was very different. It was memorable for little that was heroic. It brought many irksome wartime restrictions, ration stamps, gas shortages, loss of staff. It was a time of anxiety with the outcome long in doubt. It called for sacrifices and devotion to country. Many of our campers were called to serve, and there were losses of boys I had known well and loved. At camp we did our bit. We had a bean patch where the boys hoed and picked. The beans went to a cannery, and the boys were paid by the weight of the bag they picked in teams. "Uncle Pritch", our head counselor, came from Indiana farm folks and loved to work in the soil, and the job was his, and splendidly handled, so that the boys took pride in their achievement. A plane spotting service on a hill near camp was manned around the clock. Squads worked in farmers' fields and pitched hay. Everyone tried out on a really hazardous obstacle race course, laid out to regulation.

Finally the Japanese surrender came before the end of our summer. The announcement to the campers was a great occasion. We gathered on the shore of our beautiful lake as the sun went down, a particularly spectacular sunset, and symbolical, in the light of Japan's flag emblem. Each camper launched a candle boat with a dedication to the souls adrift on the sea of time. As the daylight faded we watched the fleet of little lights drift out across the waters. There were no speeches beyond the announcement, and then we joined in patriotic songs and a victory banquet set up in our dining-room.

* * *

One of the incidents of wartime restrictions - limiting passenger rail transportation - has a curious echo in what we are facing today, now we are flying all our campers to bus terminals in Boston. It will do away with the famous Bar Harbor Camp Special that has carried our parties to and from Maine for over fifty years. That fantastic night in the old style twelve-section and drawing-room Pullman cars was all excitement and frenzy, and precious little sleep. Despite advance notice that water

pistols would be confiscated on sight there always was plenty of sniping. And the way little human animals swing from upper berths across the aisles, and up and down, would have done credit to a monkey garden. Lack of tails seemed to be no handicap. Of course, pillows are made for throwing. Add to all this the children who are strange - scared and often car sick. Then there were foolish conductors who attempted to check the count and the half-fares when even I and my helpers couldn't be sure of an accurate count even though we had checked off our list as our people reported in at the various stations. And, despite guards at the car doors, I feared the loss of campers whenever the train stopped.

As an instance, on one of our return trips we had a dining car put on our section at New Haven for breakfast. It was cut off at New York, for our cars were divided beyond that station. A well known dance band leader, who is often called to perform at White House parties, expected to meet his son when the train arrived in Philadelphia. When I reached my office, where I had gone from the train, happy that my big responsibility was now over, I had a frantic phone call from him. No son had gotten off the train, and no one had seen him after the train left New York. I assured him he was not lost, only temporarily mislaid. The boy had not finished breakfast and had stayed on the dining car. He was forwarded on the next express. But papa was temperamentally quite disturbed. Incidentally mama was a splendid pianist and is affectionately remembered for the time she entertained us all one horribly rainy Sunday visitors' day.

Anyone who has seen the huge milling crowds of parents and children, all loaded down with ungainly packages and tripping over tennis rackets and fishing rods, must consider it a near miracle how they get sorted out and aboard their own camp train. There is the story that appeared in the New Yorker about the little girl who got to an entirely different camp from the one in which she had been enrolled, and it was weeks before the parents or the camp tumbled to the fact. I do not know if or how a transfer was effected, or if indeed she finished the season in the camp of her adoption. From what I know of some camps this could indeed happen.

There are two travel details I introduced which have served us well. All our campers are instructed to travel in the camp uniform and bring no city clothes. This makes for cleanliness and easy identification. There was a time when we collected and tagged all the city suits, and had a storage closet and it was a mess. Some suits would be used for a trip to town or a play - then, with tags removed, identification became difficult. The older fussier boys wanted their suits cleaned and pressed for the trip home - all this is obviated by travelling in the camp uniform.

The other gimic was a "Travel Permit Card". We sent a form which contained a statement to be signed by the parent that to their knowledge the child was well and had not been exposed to any contagion. It also stated where an arrival telegram should be sent if desired.

Working out the schedules, making reservations, the listing and baggage details, both going and coming, are a serious problem. It may not be so bad where a great majority come from a single geographic area. But where, as in many camps, they draw from many and widely scattered cities, it takes a traffic engineer to do the job. It was simpler when I was a boy camper. My parents were told where the rail station was and the date camp would start. It was their responsibility to get me there. I recommend a return to that system. After all, the big boarding schools like Lawrenceville or Exeter do not have chaperoned parties to bring students to school.

* * *

I do not recall where the tradition of calling all counselors "Uncle" began. Whether it anti-dated Kennebec, and we just picked it up, or rather, as I think, it developed with us and spread and became generally adopted by many other camps - I like it, for it neatly characterized the intimate relationship. Curiously, I believe it is not customary in girls' camps to call their leaders "Auntie". They seem to prefer the formal "Miss Smith", or just the given first name. I wonder why.

So our next head counselor after Mory was "Uncle Pritch". Beloved and respected by thousands of our ex-campers whose names and characteristics he miraculously remembered years after their graduation. He is retired from his teaching and football coaching in the Newark High Schools, as well as from his camp duties. He still spends his summers in his cottage across the lake from camp and most of his mornings working in camp. Twenty-odd years ago I had several thousand pines set out in a section of our land not suited to camp activities. They have grown into a fine stand, but much too dense. Pritch has undertaken practically single-handed the job of selective cutting and trimming, and it is a wonderful contribution, and will be a memorial I hope to us both. I love to go in the grove and find him there, stripped to the waist, swinging axe or saw. We sit on a log and chat of the experiences shared and the years gone by. Though the years have mellowed him, he is still a rugged individualist. We pretty well agree in our contempt for an over paternalistic government's care for the shiftless incompetents. I think there should be social security - within limits - but not automatic handouts.

The story of New York's Porto Ricans entering without restrictions to go on relief fills us both with nausea. A Miss Tandy from Elizabeth, N. J., had a small girls' camp at the far end of our lake, called Tandyland. Pritch's mother lived in Elizabeth, and knew Miss Tandy. Pritch went to pay his respects, met his Agnes there and they married. On my staff in those distant days there was another rugged individual - Harry Bickford, a real Maine down-easter, a great woodsman, hunter, canoe man and guide. Big of bone and big of heart. He and Pritch were great friends, and Bick also married a girl counselor from Tandyland. All that summer the two paddled across the lake on their nights off to do their courting. "Bick" and Mabel were married on the last day of the season in the town Grange, turned into a chapel for the occasion. The campers attended in a body - it was a lovely day. I will have more to tell of Bickford bye and bye.

One of the episodes Pritch and I liked to recall as we sat in the fragrant shade of the pines in lazy heat of a summer's day was the canoe trip down the Kennebec River on which I sent him before he became our head master. It seemed logical that a trip down the Kennebec River should be the big trip of the Kennebec Camps. We studied maps to find that the River began with tributaries and an outlet from Moosehead Lake, a hundred miles to the north. At that time it was in the domain of the Great Northern Paper Company and a true wilderness. It was to be a pioneer trip of exploration, and we chose some of our oldest strongest boys, with Pritch as guide and leader. The railroads were still in business, including the Somerset Short Line connecting the nearby town of Oakland with a terminal on Moosehead. We shipped three canoes to what we thought was the head of navigable water. Our party with canvas and camping gear, and boxes of provisions, followed to the jumping off place with a considerable hike and carry-in. Our campers must have been more rugged then. Today they complain if they have to carry a camera and fishing rod.

It was not long before they met disaster in the fast water and rapids of the descending river. The upper Kennebec was never a canoe stream, as Pritch soon discovered. They were swamped, crashed on rocks, grounded on shoals, and forced to abandon ship. The canoe journey resolved itself into a hike for home. Now they ran into further trouble of shortage of rations and of money. The expenses had far exceeded estimates, and provisions had been lost or abandoned with the canoes. I think the last day's march may have been made on empty stomachs. It was a famous catastrophe.

Actually, I learned a lot more beyond the fact that the upper Kennebec is not a canoe stream. It is interesting that

years later in reading Roberts' fine story "Arundel" I learned again what I should have remembered from my history courses, that Arnold in his march on Quebec left the Kennebec at the Carry Ponds, above Bingham where the great dam is now located. Of course, some of this trip wisdom did not crystallize all at once. Fifty years of wilderness camping still leaves plenty of room for improving techniques.

This I can say is now basic at Kennebec. The terrain and route of every trip is scouted anew before the party leaves camp. We try never to enter unknown waters with children before we have explored for unexpected hazards. A near tragedy in a little over night trip of younger children on our own Belgrade stream again drove home need for this precaution.

After a night in sleeping bags on the shore of Long Lake, one of our Belgrades, the party went on a boat ride with outboards to the end of the lake and into the stream that empties its waters eventually into the Kennebec. They were proceeding, three boats in single file, with motors humming merrily to where a road bridge crossed the stream. It hid a dam in the river just beyond the bridge. The first boat was under the bridge when my wonderful counselor "Uncle Pitt" saw the danger. There was a great head of water rushing over the dam with a wild swirl of boiling water below. Pitt stood up and grabbed the timbers of the bridge overhead. He was able to hold the boat against the current while the children scrambled to safety. Then he pulled himself up onto the bridge and let the current carry the boat and motor over the dam. I subsequently recovered a compromised verdict from the power company on the grounds that adequate warning by buoys or signs were not provided to warn of a hidden danger to navigation. It would not have compensated had we suffered a loss of life. The other two following boats had put into shore.

Another thing the trip down the Kennebec emphasized. Divide the provision and other duffle so that one canoe does not carry all the food, another the canvas and bedding. If one of the fleet capsizes, and the contents are lost, you may go on short rations but have enough to carry on. We have also learned to establish credit along our trip routes. It has happened that a leader's wallet with the exchequer has made an independent voyage down river without its owner. Other adventures have also established this as basic precautions. Every party must have at least two adequate responsible leaders, so, if it is necessary for one to return to camp with a sick or injured camper the other can continue.

Once I was having a wonderful time with an overnight fishing party. We had set up a production line preparing our big

catch with a scaler, a gutter and a cooker. Our party was large and our catch rewarding. Then a boat with a lone messenger hove into shore. An urgent message had arrived in camp to immediately get one of our older boys off his canoe trip in the Northern-Woods to fly him home to Cincinnati. The funeral of his father was being held up for his arrival. A Chartered plane flew into a lake where my party was scheduled to be. The boy was picked up and brought to camp by one of the counselors. There was adequate supervision left for the trip to continue.

Finally, two to a canoe with duffle is a load. We have long since given up the economy of an extra camper in each canoe to rotate and relieve the paddler. Recently a neighboring camp had a tragic drowning where an overloaded canoe was swamped in a wind swept turbulent Northern lake. It does not pay to overload.

* * *

As my memories turn to these wonderful limitless Northern Woods, and more particularly to Mt. Katahdin and the waters of the Allagash. I remember the trip I took with my then much loved associate, Brod Friedman, and Harry Bickford of our staff. Put the six foot-one of Bick in store clothes - he was one of the gawkiest, most awkward figures of a scare crow. But in a checkered shirt and a battered felt hat ornamented with trout flies stuck in the band, he was a fine figure of a man, rather of the Abe Lincoln type. Expert with axe, paddle and setting pole, he became a living part of his canoe. He was the first of a long line of Maine teacher guides to lead us into the big Woods.

Incidentally, I remember his two beautiful daughters. As they grew into teen-agers and beyond, a Sunday visit to their dad in camp would visibly raise the temperature of our quad. Harry Junior loved the woods, like his father, and I remember him as an outstanding camper on trips. But he gave up his early dreams of a life in the North Woods, sold his father's camp on Chesuncook Lake, got a good job with the DuPonts, and acquired a national reputation as a racer and builder of outboard speed boats. There is irony in this. One of Bick's few hates was the outboard kicker that, with their noisy put-put, threatened to replace the beloved silent canoe on our lakes.

That fall the excursion we made with Bick had a very serious purpose. We proposed establishing a base camp for our oldest campers where they would have wilderness camping and an outfitting post to jump off for the Allagash and other long canoe trips. Harry already had a log cabin at the northern end of Chesuncook Lake where the West Branch of the Penobscot comes

in. There were a few other cabins and a rest depot for lumberjacks of the Great Northern Paper Company, to whom most of these lands belonged. The little settlement was generally known as Smithtown, and Ma Smith baked bread and pies, and there was a fire warden's phone line which sometimes worked. For many years, when the lake was free of ice, Alex Gun ran a mail boat three days a week from Ripogenus Dam and back the following day. Our boys came by truck to the end of the Company road at the Dam, then in Alex Gun's mail boat up the twenty-five mile lake to our camp. I called it Kennesuncook. It was there we kept our twenty-odd canoes and camping gear.

We secured a ready built cabin on the lake shore and secured a courtesy lease to a nice tract from the Paper Company at a nominal rent. We had the local woodsmen build a set of log cabins - a good sized lodge for living and eating, a number of bunk houses, and cleared a volley ball court and some horse shoe pitching pits.

My original intention was to make this a separate independent unit where the boys who had outgrown Kennebec would spend their summer. Bickford was to pick a staff and be in absolute charge. It did not work out that way. Our city boys have loved the time spent at Chesuncook and the great canoe cruise through Umbazooksis, Chamberlain and Eagle Lakes, down the Allagash around the falls, through the Rankin Rapids and the St. John to take out at Fort Kent on the border. What memories those names bring back of adventure and mishap and wonderful cook-outs and campfire stories. But they also wanted to share in the organized sports and social life of the big camp. So that is how it has been - a summer equally divided between the two.

Bick would remain in his own cabin through the fall hunting season. Often he would guide parties of sports or just hunt, trap and fish alone. He was a sociable guy, but he claimed he enjoyed his own company best in the woods - no responsibility for what a tenderfoot could dream up. One year he told me he got lost coming out. Chesuncook Lake had frozen solid, and he had driven his Model T over the ice with supplies from the dam. The day he drove out he was caught in a blinding snow storm when in the middle and far from shore. He drove and drove expecting to strike the shore. Then he became aware that he was repeatedly crossing other car tracks in the fresh snow. How could it happen that there were several fool drivers out on the frozen lake in this near blizzard? Then he realized he was crossing his own tracks as he was driving blindly in circles.

Then late one fall came the sad news that Harry had not come out, and a search party had found his loaded sled and gun

half submerged on the bank of a stream, where he had a little outpost camp. His body was recovered the following spring when the ice went out. He had gone through a fault in the ice and drowned. The shallow water in the little connecting creeks can freeze early, and overnight. I well remember the time we hurried out, to save dragging our canoes over the ice, not as easy or pleasant as paddling a loaded boat. Even so, the thin ice had formed a crust. We rocked our boats to break a passage through, and none too soon.

It was probably on this trip that I was a guest in a lumber camp, and I carried away vivid memories both of sights, sounds and smells. The good and ample food served the men the two meals they get in camp is a compelling lure to get the crews into the woods. The expression of a table groaning with the weight of victuals may well have originated there. There was no conversation at the table. The business of shovelling down the food was all absorbing. Nor was much time lost in conversation when the men rose from the long wooden benches that flanked the boards on trestles that made the table. In the bunk house there were tiers of uppers and lowers. The sleeping boxes were filled with spruce boughs and the coverings were quilts. It was nippy weather and an iron pot bellied stove glowed cherry red. The barracks had no windows, except skylights, and the atmosphere was soon stifling, also our hides were not cutie hardened. For this and other persuasive counts of bodily comfort we soon took our sleeping bags under the stars. Only there were no stars that night. We pulled our beds under the shelter of an overhanging roof. It was a long night. We were up before dawn with the men, and had a washup at the pump. No dip in the lake that morning. And we did full justice to a man size breakfast, pies and all.

After we lost Harry Bickford a fine young graduate of the University of Maine took command of our Kennesuncook group and camp. Frank McGinley was our head guide and trip leader for many years. In the winter he taught in the Bangor High School and coached football. He acquired a wife and a hilltop farm where he now harvests blueberries for the market. He became a noted bird-dog man. He raised and trained pointers. I delighted in going after grouse and woodcock with him, to see how these beautiful dogs took up the bird scent, pointed and retrieved, though my own shooting was erratic, and plainly disgusted the dogs.

Frank had a commission in War II and was an instructor in a Southern training camp. He was driving his car alone when he suffered a near fatal head injury in a head on collision. After months of hospitalization he made a long slow recovery of memory and motor function. The following summer, with some misgiving,

I reengaged his services, as a canoe instructor, not as head of the senior division. He improved during the season, and the year following was back in his old job.

Unhappily, the accident affected his personality beyond what I realized. He was no longer as companionable or popular a leader as before. Many of the boys were actually afraid of him, finding his temper and reaction to their pranks unpredictable. On the Allagash canoe trip an incident occurred in which Mac really acted for what he knew was right and for the interest of camp. Unhappily, on top of previous irritations, it produced a near mutiny.

There then existed a most important wagon carry over three miles of difficult trail into Mud Pond. The old logger had a team of Northern Paper Company horses who could negotiate the treacherous footing. It took several trips to transport all the canoes and duffle of so considerable a party. Before the camp season opened McGinley had scheduled the carry and bargained for the charges. It was a monopoly and the old man had raised his portage fee to a monopoly charge. When Mac had his first canoes on the wagon he recalled the price as per the pre-season agreement. The carry man refused to move on those terms. Mac was in a high rage. He ordered his boys to unrope and unload the canoes. They carried both their canoes and all their cargo across by hand. It was a tough all day job with many heavy loads across, and a hike back for more.

As a camping party should always be kept reasonably small to camp comfortably and for happy control, it is customary to split our Allagash trips into two or three separate parties with a day or more between. So that generally one group pulls into the best selected area where the previous party spent the night. Mac McGinley always led the van.

When our party number two arrived at Mud Pond carry Mac's group, delayed by their hand carry, were still on shore and they were not happy. McGinley requested the veteran and experienced counselor in charge of the second Allagash to back him up and refuse to be held up for ransome. But Charley Graham did not see it that way. He would not sour the trip for his boys, and paid the extortionate fee. Back in camp there were plenty of repercussions. The boys of trip one called the campers of trip two softies. But in general, public opinion was all for Graham, and Mac was rated a slave driver. I became aware that it would be difficult to enroll campers for the following summer who dreaded being in charge of McGinley and on the trip with him. Very reluctantly I replaced McGinley as head of our Kunnesuncook campers. I lost a very devoted leader and a good friend. I have seen Mac

since then, but relations have been strained, and he refuses to visit camp or attend reunions. He still hunts, and I read of his dogs carrying off honors in the local field trials.

There is an interesting sidelight in this as to qualities of leadership. McGinley was a fine canoe man, and he realized that it required both paddle skill and endurance to stand the pace for many hours each day that a long trip demanded. As the normal routine of camp life on our lake required no long sustained paddling he introduced "conditioning paddling" around our Belgrade Lakes after the evening meal. He would set the pace in the lead canoe and the long line of these graceful little boats strung out in a long file made a beautiful picture as they passed in front of the shore of my cottage which faced the setting sun. But it was more work than fun for the campers, and Mac, a perfectionist, was sharp and critical of the form and progress of his crew. It was a major element in his growing unpopularity.

The recent head of this section is a real boys' hero, and has unusual leadership. The canoe conditioners are still very much a part of the pre-trip program, but they are rather popular than otherwise. It is a distinction to be called out for them. It is the same with every activity. There just is no substitute for enthusiastic leadership. It is the quality that makes a memorable teacher or a great coach. It does not depend upon outstanding knowledge or skill. It most certainly has nothing to do with what is taught at Teachers' Colleges. It is contagious enthusiasm pure and simple.

* * *

There are many important activities that, on their own appeal, would have scant following in competing for the interest of the average child. Certainly shop work, nature study, art, music or even dancing, will not be as popular as any of the competitive sports, or swimming, sailing or water skiing. But I have seen all of them become of absorbing interest whenever we found the true enthusiast to spark the campers' interest. So I have dropped or added activities to match the competence of the staff. There would be a season when photography, for example, would seem of major importance, with clothes-line shows and competitions, only to sink into very minor interest as the activating leader failed to return. The same for nature lore when cabin groups begged for their turn to be taken on early morning bird hikes; or archery or dramatics or Indian lore, would be the rage. And the same was true of the major sports. I also found that these enthusiasts could be very expensive. For they fought for ever more and finer equipment in their specialties, more and better courts for tennis, more and finer sail boats, bigger and

better stage equipment for dramatics, more telescope sights for rifles. But this is what the smart camp executive needs and wants, as long as it paces the interest of his campers.

My own early boyhood summers were spent in Cape May, the southern most tip of New Jersey. In fact, that was where I was born one sultry June day. There I grew up with little sail boats on the "thoroughfare" as a boy's dream of what was most fun in the world. We sailed and raced catboats with center boards. Many a day the wind would drop and leave me far from dock. There were no auxiliaries and no patrol launches to tow becalmed boats home. So I would arrive at our cottage long past supper time. I marvel now at the forbearance of my parents, and only now realize the anxiety I must have occasioned.

When I proposed adding a couple of sail boats to our camp equipment, my partner Charles Fox bitterly opposed sailing as an activity too hazardous. In vain I argued that there were no bars, channels or tides in our lake. So it was not until he had withdrawn as co-director that I included sailing as a regular camp activity. I am sure there is none more popular or that has more enriched the lives of the hundreds of campers wherever small boat sailing has become part of the program. Its appeal is as strong to the athletic minded as to the less competitive. It is wonderful to see the child who needs self assurance and a feeling of accomplishment beam as they reach the coveted rank of "skipper". Like riding, it seems that sailing has a special appeal in our girl camps, where the more rugged competitive games have limited participation.

We have been most fortunate in finding a true devotee of sailing, with a scholar's approach to this skill, in a college professor, who has continued his association because he so loves his summers afloat. As there is a very real conflict between the need to teach sailing by handling a boat with full responsibility for consequences and the safety factor; good judgment and vigilance with adequate rescue facilities are a must. So after very short basic instruction with a skipper a learner should be given command of a boat and be coached by the sailing master from a motor boat, rather than inboard.

I have taken endless delight in watching the deep blue waters of a lake rippled by a summer's breeze and dotted by the many white sails of many shapes and sizes as they skim and maneuver. For it is important to handle a variety of boats with various rigging, from the sailfish, which is a glorified surf board, to complicated racing craft. For racing is the cream of small boat handling and its complicated rules in itself are a stimulating study to differentiate a sailor from a drifter. This gives the

victory to the skilful handler rather than merely to the fastest boat. The decision when to tack and what canvas to carry under varying conditions of wind and weather is what counts.

As intercamp sail boat racing gained in popularity there was an attempt to secure a standard boat design so that visiting crews would be familiar with the kind of boat they would be required to handle. The association of Maine Camp Directors had many boat designs submitted to meet the requirements at a price that would appeal. But as far as I know, few camps secured boats of any standard type.

Some of the boys who did their first sailing on our Belgrade Lakes have gone on to become yachting enthusiasts. We have had participants in the famous Bermuda challenge races, and campers now grown into men who own and sail magnificent craft on sounds and bays. I know several whose family vacations are spent under sail from New York to Maine. I can see much merit in a specialized sailing camp for the unusual type of child who might be lost in a camp whose activity program is mainly on so-called sports.

* * *

Now the latest in water sports is speed boating and water skiing. Gone the lazy peace and quiet of our inland waters. All day long and far into the night we hear the roar of motors. It is as perilous to cross the pond as to walk across Broadway against the light. It seems we will need traffic lights and marked lanes and speed laws to control this new menace.

I attended a public hearing of a committee of the State Senate to consider legislation to regulate motor boating. The Senate chamber was crowded, standing room only. There were representatives of boat liveryies, motor salesmen, resort owners, racing organizations and private enthusiasts. On some points there seemed general agreement; that boats should be licensed, for instance. That would put a fee in the Treasury. The danger of irresponsible driving into swimming areas and boat landings should be forbidden. These provisions were finally incorporated into a law. It was also made mandatory that two people must handle a water skier so that the man steering would not have his attention diverted. This is a step in the right direction, but there is no adequate power of enforcement like the cop on the motor cycle. I also recommended that there be an age limit for operators of boats of over a fixed horse power, similar to auto licensing. This idea was impressed on me when I observed some youngsters, not campers, who dashed up and down the lake daily at top speed and wide open throttle around and around, going no where. Then

as this became monotonous they tried buzzing anything else afloat, seeing how near they could come to a collision and turn away. Surely, I felt they could be better employed developing muscles, skill and endurance in swinging a paddle or pulling an oar.

Skiing has come to stay, and it is a thrilling sport. It too requires careful supervision and preliminary passing of tough swimming tests. Then it develops strength and courage. I found it, like sailing, was a prime incentive to the reluctant swimmer. A lad who for several seasons was content to have passed his sinker's tests suddenly got busy when he wanted to try skiing. He became a beautiful swimmer, and lost all fear of the water in less than a month.

* * *

In the era following the end of the first war, camping came into its own. Many camps of many kinds were started; organization sponsored, private, for boys, for girls, and coeducational. The American child was to expect a camp experience as part of his heritage. He was urged to attend the Scout boy or girl camp, or a camp run by his church. He could go to a so-called work camp, or specialize for tutoring or art, riding, dramatics and dancing. Many of these have not survived.

From very early years I had limited the enrollment, and have felt that a camp must be kept small enough so that top direction could take a personal interest in every member of the community, and no child be overlooked in the crowd. At this time pressure for placement caused a steady rise in this enrollment figure. I felt it was time to divide and multiply. A junior camp entirely apart and separate but jointly owned and operated was the answer.

When Kennebec started there was no question or problem as to a camper's age, for there was then no thought of sending very young children away from home for a summer. Perhaps a younger brother might tag along, though seldom if he was under ten. Older boys and girls were the rule, for there was little competition from Youth Hostels, European Tours, auto jaunts and country clubs. But now there was insistent demand to take care of much younger groups. In the big Eastern cities like New York, the problem of outdoor supervised play during the long school vacation could be solved by sending Johnny away to camp and this would at the same time provide a welcome vacation for parents. At this point there were camps ready and willing to accept campers in diapers.

For a long time the minimum age I favored was twelve. It seemed to me that allowed the important teen ages for camp. But as many children were being sent to a camp that would accept them at eight or even younger we lost desirable prospects that should normally have come to us.

In developing a definitely Junior Camp I wanted a set-up and program that would be tailored for the pre-adolescent - the year spread from nine to twelve. It should be imaginative, adventuresome and without outside competition to avoid Varsity teams for which these youngsters were not ready. An Indian Nation made a fine back ground for tradition and activity.

When junior started, my first concern was to secure a dynamic head for my staff. As I did not want to start with any carry over of ideas from the old established unit, I determined to start with an all new staff of counselors. There was now a new need for some feminine influence, I felt, in handling younger children.

I thought there should be a camp mother - a completely erroneous idea. So I was interested in both Guerdon Messer and his family. He was a Springfield graduate and his wife was the daughter of Dr. Searley, its dean. I drove to Troy to meet them at Ranslear Tech where Guerdon was head of Physical Education. Guerdon was a fine organizer and a natural leader. His wife Ethel, and the two beautiful daughters who occupied a cottage on the camp shore proved more of a liability. I have concluded that the feminine influence in a boys' camp is much like seasoning in cooking. It is most important but should not be obvious, and if there is too much of it the dish is spoiled. My associates have all been married but in the Senior original camp, the wives never intruded or became a part of the community. Their visits were as limited as were those of parents; it was strictly a man's world.

The summer after I returned from France with a wife, I gave up my little cabin in the circle where the boys lived. This was a great sacrifice, and I have missed that intimate contact with my campers. Ever since Guerdon Messer the head counselors, and all of the married men have had their families live outside of camp.

Following our marriage and honeymoon in Europe, Olga and I had a stormy March crossing on the Northern route, and when confined to our staterooms I spent time designing the house I would build for our Maine occupancy. I sent the plans to my friend Watson who did the camp building. It has a lovely location on the shore facing the setting sun and we have loved it through the years, making few alterations. But when we first

stepped into the living room we found a stout post plumb in the center of our living room. Watson explained that it was a security against the weight of winter snow on the roof when we were not there to shovel it off. Despite the removal of that precaution our roof has not caved in. Then the lakeside door I had indicated in my plan opened wide into outer space and a drop of ten feet or more to the ground. The sunset balcony to which it was to give access had been forgotten. I suppose my builder's idea was just open the door and step out into the sunset.

The real home atmosphere of our cottage on the edge of the camp grounds has played an important role. At no time has Olga assumed any official position; she has never been a "camp mother" or assumed any fixed responsibility. Yet many an ex-camper remembers his visits with her in our house, - and "You must meet Aunt Olga" was a frequent greeting to visiting mothers. The very fact that there was no official connection and that visits to our house were purely social, unscheduled and voluntary, made them so important. Frequently a young child, away from his parents, yearns for a little family life which he cannot get in the typical camp environment. And it constituted a veritable haven for the homesick.

Fortunate, indeed, those of us who have not experienced the blues of home sickness at some time or another. I have seen it in all degrees and stages, and go on record that it is far from a merely imaginary illness. In a junior group of a hundred children about ten cases of varying severity are average. Curiously too, it is impossible to predict in advance the child most likely to succumb. Again and again I have been warned by mama that her child has never been from home overnight and will doubtless be homesick. Often, I think, she was disappointed to find him enthusiastically happy from his first day of separation. On the other hand, the real aggressive go-getter with advance billing that here is the type for whom camps are built may be the woe begone babe in the woods.

The successful handling of homesick cases varies as much as the children themselves. Often it takes time and patience to find the right solution. Sympathy and understanding at first, then more direct suggestion, and finally a bit of stern authority are indicated.

A little red head from Texas came to me after his first breakfast, "Uncle Lou", when does the next train leave?

He just needed friends - to be integrated in a group. I turned him over to his section leader.

A wonderful sensitive fine little performer could not understand why he woke up early each morning with such a lost feeling and couldn't control his tears. He needed sympathetic reasoning and an understanding that we all must learn adjustment to new situations as part of the process of growing up.

Then there was the chap we picked up on the high road several miles from camp. He was going to go home if need be on foot; quite an undertaking, as he came from the deep South. And we had a most difficult case of the boy whose father, a former camper, had oversold the camp and the boy, although he had plenty of his friends with him, missed his affectionate family too terribly. He was physically upset to the point of not eating or sleeping, and this for days. My wife adopted him until he recovered, and she has been a major resource in many of the worst cases I remember. This boy was a gifted musician and when things got too blue he would come to our house and thump our piano. It was a bit distracting for us, but in a good cause. A bit later he was helped out of his slough of despond by having all his gang come to us for a party and getting him to play for an applauding group.

Inevitably the first move will be an insistent request to telephone home. This I temporize; the wires are not free - the parents would be worried - maybe if he made a brave effort we might consider it tomorrow. Two things are of prime importance - to get the patient to fight along and for the parents to cooperate. I have had some real difficulties when over-anxious parents have entered into bargains and promised to take Johnny home with them when they came up for their mid season visit.

I have felt that it spelled a bad defeat for any boy or girl to yield to home sickness and leave. To be a quitter must leave a scar of acknowledged weakness, a record of defeat. I can only remember one or two instances of finally losing a homesick child, though I have come close to giving up on a few stubborn cases. Then I would be reinforced by my sympathetic wife, my interested staff - and oh very helpful indeed - a group of older campers who had suffered in their day and were now enthusiastic old timers.

There was one well remembered case I did not win. Sam came from a lovely home way down in Mobile. His over anxious mother brought him to the Pennsylvania Railroad Station in New York. When he joined our group there he felt lost. There were so many excited reunions, back-slapping and hilarity, he felt out of it. He decided he would go home. Told he would have to at least make the trip and see what camp was like, and assured once there he would like it, he became hysterical. Then he was lost by the senior in whose charge I placed him. Before train time he was

found hiding in the men's toilet. Mama was naturally upset and unfortunately decided she would make an independent journey and stay near camp 'til Sam adjusted. We were on a fair way to winning Sam over when Mama sailed into view. Following a day of conferences in which the decision changed from hour to hour. Sam left rather reluctantly. The parents admitted they had been to blame. He came to camp the following year on his own request.

* * *

It has been my observation that women are far better housekeepers and that where there are only men in charge of the premises, camps tend to be dirty, even if maintenance is tops. This unhappily is true not only of the grounds and premises, but maybe more importantly of the personnel and campers. It does not seem necessarily the mark of a good woodsman to go unshaved and in disreputable apparel. A terrific trip leader who headed up groups that spent entire months on the tough East Branch trip was meticulous and always changed to clean whites before starting cooking for his party. I am impressed when I visit a camp to see the girls or boys smartly attired in clean uniforms.

If I over stress the point, I have a recollection of the horrible problem, highly contagious skin impetigo can be. It is a dirt strep infection. My first personal encounter with impetigo happened when I spent a summer camping under canvas with a couple of chaps from our law class, on Deer Island in Lake Placid. We were just too busy having a good time to bother with the house-keeping details. It must have been pretty bad, for we all ran face and buttock sores which were no end humiliating, as we were socially in demand at the swank summer hotels.

I learned a lot more about impetigo when I ran into multiple cases during successive seasons in our camps. We did not have antibiotics to fight the lesions in early days, but our doctors ordered strict segregation of any one infected. One summer it really got out of hand, and we set up an isolation encampment in our shop buildings. Impetigo is not a disease of the system, so those in quarantine needed a full time program of activities - a camp within a camp. One of our senior campers was a natural as a comedian. He since became the successful head and program director of the Metropolitan radio-television network. He helped to keep up the morale of the afflicted by organizing them into an "Imp Village". He conducted tours through the compound, had native exhibitions, dances, and ceremonies but the comedy failed to amuse me.

I called in an eminent New York dermatologist to study

cause and advise cure. We installed hot showers with an adequate water supply, and insisted on their scheduled supervised use.

Beyond this, I found the insistence on attention to personal as well as organizational hygiene at times hard to meet a woman's rigorous standards but have been happy with the results when I did. Girls' camps generally do better. My connection with Boy Scouts, Y's and Big Brothers have taken me into many organization camps where no women are in evidence. Many would be improved by providing more soap and water and by a more liberal application of the scrub brush.

But for me personally, I was at times driven to near distraction by my wife's desire to shield little children from undue exposure to what I felt were legitimate risks and necessary hardening adventures. For instance, arrangements have been completed for a two day camping out in the woods. Bedding rolls have been packed in the boats for transport, provisions, carefully rationed, have been stowed. The boys await the signal to pull out. Then a sudden summer storm darkens the sky. Distant thunder rolls. Frantically my helpmate cries to me:

"Are you crazy to send these children into the woods in this weather?" I try to explain that this is part of what I believe camps are for. No harm will come from a little rain. People do not dissolve. The experience of a storm shared is high adventure, and ample protection and shelter is provided. The leadership is adequate.

I do not convince her. The campers come back unharmed and enthusiastic. But I will have the same hurdle to surmount next time. It is a salutary brake to keep my hardiness in check. I must evaluate my plans more carefully - must be sure I am safely within my margin of "permissible risk".

There were more serious illnesses than impetigo to test our medical facilities and add to a director's gray hairs. We ran our share of epidemics of mumps and measles. And when the first three weeks of the season had safely carried us past the normal periods of incubation, a big load of worry was taken from me. Naturally, the younger the group age, the greater is the chance of contagious children's diseases.

I remember one time when a case of measles had been diagnosed and isolated, I secured immunizing serum by air mail and it arrived so late that the campers were asleep when necessary arrangements for inoculations were completed. We aroused the boys a cabin at a time, marched them to the dispensary, and packed them back in their beds. Many of them had absolutely no

recollection next morning of what had happened and could not understand why their bottoms seemed sore and why everybody seemed to be limping.

We had one very tragic drowning incident and one narrow escape from a mass disaster. Seashore, the nineteen year old son of the Iowa University professor who made up many of the army mental fitness tests, was drowned in Lobster Lake. He was a young counselor with our camping party of twelve year olds. He was on our staff as a swimming instructor - a splendid performer. After the camp on the pond shore had been set up, a game warden came by in his canoe equipped with an outboard motor. Following an exchange of pleasantries, he invited young Seashore to go with him on his scouting round. Influenced by the circumstance that it was the young man's birthday, head counselor Pritchard who commanded the party gave exceptional consent to Seashore to go. A squall kicked up a rolling surf. It soaked and stalled the little motor. The canoe drifted broadside to the waves and swamped not far from the shore. Why Seashore failed to swim ashore remains a mystery. He was hampered by his rain coat and shoes. His wonderful parents gave me an unforgettable example of understanding and forbearance in their bereavement.

An interesting part of Kennebec's equipment is its war canoes. They are sturdy thirty-four foot long canvas boats and can hold eighteen paddlers, a cox and helmsman.

This is how one was loaded plus some dunnage and personal packs on a bright summer morning; the start of a trip to another lake. The plan was for them to cross our own lake to a taking out point for a short hike to the town of Oakland where they would take train transportation. The lake on our shore was wind protected and calm, but as the boat got out of the shelter of the lea there was a stiff breeze and some choppy water. The boat was overloaded and there was little free board. The boys were not a crew or accustomed to paddling together. When the splash of the waves hit the paddlers on the port side they flinched over to starboard. This added to the weight of the boys already on that side, and caused the canoe to roll over. In an instant the water was full of struggling boys, bedding rolls, knapsacks, cameras, fishing rods and miscellaneous parcels. With the help of the waterwise leaders all the party reached shore safely. The loss was confined to the missed trip and the bedding, etc. which sank. Lady Luck surely was with us that day.

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When the Junior camp came into the picture, the original two 34 foot war canoes became a part of the important equipment of the new unit. As a war canoe it worked into the Indian tradition. A new additional boat was built to order at Old Town so that each of the three tribes, Penobscot, Passamaquody and Micmac was assigned one. In the first few years a tribe was made up of the boys and Uncles in three of the cabins of six boys each, since changed to seven and as the camps grew the Malacite and Norridgewock tribes were added. A new canoe joined the fleet with each addition. I doubt if any more could be gotten or built today. These boats are babied as is no other part of camp. They have been repaired, rebuilt and fiber glassed and have served remarkably well. As they hold 20 boy paddlers and a cox and stern Uncle, we can put the entire camp afloat in them. They serve as transports to Senior, when the Juniors go visiting their older brothers, or to other points on the lakes.

The unique and very special use of these big canoes are the inter-tribe races held on Sunday mornings, with the big Nation race on the big parents visitors day. The little braves become extraordinarily proficient under the drive of this competition, for rivalry is very keen. It is a great sight to see all the little brown bodies bending in rhythmic unison to drive the graceful boats down the course. I imagine that in the snap shot albums of every parent who has had a son at Kennebec there must be at least one picture of the finish of a war canoe race.

* * *

One of the things I treasure is a beautiful bronze plaque inserted in the stone face of the fireplace of the old original assembly lodge in Junior Camp. It was placed there by the parents in appreciation of a heroic and successful handling of a polio scare following an early camp case of that dread disease.

As soon as the case was diagnosed I secured the services of a woman doctor from the New York Rockefeller Clinic who stayed in camp for the entire three weeks of our quarantine. She had temperature readings of every one in the community charted twice daily. We modified activities and cut off all contacts with the outside world. The parents were immediately notified and told they would get a daily bulletin, but that they could not visit or break our quarantine. The State health authorities were very helpful. They ruled that no child could be removed by public transportation or taken into any other location without the written permit of its health officer. There were some wonderfully cooperative parents, also some who were determined to get their child by hook or crook, come hell or high water. There were some cops and robbers plots

to abduct children by force or ruse. But my staff had orders and were on the alert, and there were no successful kidnappings.

From the beginning of our ordeal we separated the cabin group to which our patient had belonged. There was a little primitive log cabin in our woods a short way down the shore. I set up a camp for the five boys and their really remarkable leader there. I say "remarkable" advisedly, for when their isolation ended they were unanimous in declaring it the best three weeks of the camp season. There were no other cases and when it was all back of us as history our parents recognized it as a well handled emergency with a happy ending.

Actually, I had at least a couple more experiences of kidnapping attempts or scares. Soon after the Lindbergh horror there were some threats of children being held for ransoms. I had the son of one of the richest American merchandising tycoons enrolled. He asked if he could place a personal guard to keep constant watch over his son in Camp, as he had received a set of threatening notes. I convinced him we could do a competent job of security policing without outside help.

More exciting was the fight for possession and custody of one of my campers between his separated parents. The father, a resident of New York, seemed the responsible parent and he had sent the child to us. The mother, who had deserted was English and was fighting for a large settlement. She secured a court order that the boy was not to be removed from the jurisdiction of the New York Courts pending settlement of the case. The papers, however, could not be served and she hired private operatives to get possession of Johnny. The father advised us by phone and asked me to prevent any one reaching his son, and to have me get him back to New York and into his own custody. The joker in the plot developed in that it was just then that Johnny developed a fine case of mumps and was in an isolation ward in the Waterville Sisters' Hospital. When the mother's representatives arrived and asked to see Johnny I could safely invite them in to find him, and regretted that I could not produce him as "he had left camp". That night I picked up Johnny, mumps and all, at the Hospital, despite his quarantine, and drove him to Augusta, where I had reserved a room at the Augusta House. Fortunately, I had friends in both places. Johnny's father meanwhile had driven up from New York. The next night, we wrapped up Johnny in blankets, and I started him on the drive back with his father, to remove any contempt charges for taking the boy out of New York State jurisdiction against court orders. So the divorce action was successfully defended and the boy placed in the custody of the father's family. I must say I enjoyed playing my part in this cat and mouse game,

with camp as a cheering section.

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When Guerdon Messer and I organized our Kennebec Junior Indian Nation and divided the boys into tribes for their ceremonial and sports, I was interested in getting as authentic a background as possible. I found the Algonquin Abenaki had been native to Maine and that we could use such tribal divisions as Penobscot and Passamoquoddy and add such others as need might indicate.

Besides some research in state archives and the help of Dr. Frank Speck a professor of anthropology at Penn who had just completed a study of the Penobscots on Indian Island, near Old Town, I was fortunate in getting Princess Watawatso to be our guest. She attended our ceremonial camp fires and we organized Grand Councils of our Abenaki Indians. They have become a fine ceremony and a prized tradition over the years.

In a tree enclosed little clearing on top of a hill, a massive granite boulder is decorated with a painted Thunder Bird - next to it is the platform for the Sachem and the big chiefs. In a circle with the deep woods as a background is a double row of log benches.

There has been no set time or schedule for these camp-fire meetings, and there is excitement in trying to figure out and anticipate them. The beating of an Indian drum, the runner's call to council comes when campers least expect it, and is followed by a wild rush to get ceremonial gear. Then led by the messenger the single file enters the ring by tribes.

The lighting of the fire, the invocation to the great spirits of Sky, Earth and Winds, the solemn smoking of the peace pipe preceed a varied program of audience participation, scout reports, games of skill or clowning, and a final story. Much of the fun was due to the variety of tricks used in lighting the council fire. At the first council it was usually done with the traditional friction fire drill, or flint on stone. Thereafter the ball of fire descended from heaven. Of course, the first time we use it the boys are not fooled; they see the man up the tree who ignites the tinder. But the next time there is no one up a tree. Then, using buried fuses, we have the camper chieftains dance with torches and light individual fires arranged in a circle around the big one. I told them how by uniting their strength the little single fires will light the Nation. By timing the fuses the spectacular center blaze is ignited to this cue. And there are many more variations so that we do not exhaust the possible surprises in any one season.

Messer and I also developed a "coup" tally incentive. In our Indian lore a "coup" is won and claimed for a meritorious deed or performance. It can be in a regular test as in swimming or in any recognized activity - or a dramatic or musical performance, or an act of citizenship. The record is kept on a "Birch Bark Scroll" and the coups are claimed at Grand Council.

But to me the great moment is when the first leaping flames are reflected in the eyes of all those intense expectant young faces. The closing story sets the mood of the camp fire and is the opportunity for the trained story teller to assure the success of the council. I like a story with heroic action in a back woods setting, Indian or pioneer. I find there is great preference among boys much more than in girls groups for scare stories - ghost or horror. I have only sanctioned these on limited occasions. But I have one such story called the "Wendigo", based on an accredited Indian legend of a supernatural beast that carries its victims into the high air at such terrific speed it gives them the sensation their feet are burning. This story I have told at special story campfires and it has become traditional. Stories of this type I find no longer make the impression they did before the advent of television with its "Hitchcock Presents" and "Suspense". Still an occasional story night is an event, especially if followed with a wiener and marshmallow roast over the dying embers and a night hike back to Camp.

One of my most rewarding experiences over the years has been my reading to the boys as part of their Sunday night assembly. It has taken much time and care in the selection and preparation of material. This differs radically from the occasional story night and is far more successful as a fixed anticipated program. I am constantly asked by the boys, "Uncle Lou, are you continuing the book tonight?"

I choose only books of true adventure and high heroism written for adults. I cut out long descriptive passages - whole chapters. I divide my text into about equal episodes, six or seven, the number of readings I anticipate. I am thoroughly familiar with my material. I almost know it by heart. I dramatize - there are times of intense excitement, as the action rises. The boys say I always stop at the most exciting part. I try to. That is the secret of any successful serial.

Here are the titles of some of the books I have used.
There is no royalty fee.

Men of Colditz - Reid
Sledge Patrol - Howarth
Escape from Corregidor - Whitcomb
You'll Die in Singapore - McCormack
Master of the Princess Pat - Osborne
Twenty Seconds to Live - Land
Wasa-Wasa - Macfie
Crocodile Fever - Earl
Tigrero - Siemel

* * *

Evening programs bring to mind one of my most interesting counselors. Charles Archer, "Uncle Archie" came to us considerably younger than what I usually required. But he seemed unusually responsible and had a fine Scouting background. During the many seasons at Kennebec Junior Camp he successfully directed wood lore, some craft programs, and finally our assemblies and evening entertainments.

Archie came from a suburban Connecticut community where he became Scout executive. Then he was a house master and lower grade teacher in a well known private academy near New York. His progress there was restricted because of his educational limitations. After his second summer in Maine he decided to remain and became a teacher in a back woods primitive typical "little red school house". As he described it, there were no facilities, no washroom, and if a child was thirsty he went outside to the well, provided it wasn't frozen. And he loved it. He soon was on terms of fond intimacy with the families of his pupils who adored him. He introduced and coached athletic teams; he organized entertainments, square dances, and rehearsed dramatics.

Abandoned farms in Maine could be had for the asking. Archie bought one near his school and lived there alone through the long Northern winter, giving scant attention to his own physical needs. He had been a devoted son to a domineering mother and remained a confirmed bachelor after her death. At no time did I see him show any interest in any girl though he enjoyed going out with the unmarried members of the camp staff who often dated girls. Archie's great and only love was for the boys under his care - well, not quite his only interest, for animals claimed a large share of his affection. He had rabbits, a cat, and eventually two magnificent large German shepherds - Robbie and Mickey. All of these he loved devotedly and neglected even as he neglected himself.

One winter day, while he was at school, his farm house and the barn burned down to the ground. Archie had a little insurance and sold the land - some of it was pond shore - advantageously. He then bought a nice house on a main high road not too many miles outside of our city of Waterville, and took the job of organizing and directing the new Boys' Club of that city. He still spent his summers with me at camp, which more and more became his outstanding interest. Archie is still remembered for the unusual roller skating ballet routine his youngsters staged. And another year his boys did a tumbling act under his coaching.

His own cabin group always were knit into a unit. He took fatherly care of them and they went off on separate and many secret adventures. He preferred having boys who had problems instead of the easily adjusted fellow, and some of his successes with these black sheep developed devoted friendships which extended into their homes and future camp years. But still his heart went out to the under privileged lads of the poor country side and the mill end of the town.

During the bitter cold winter months he would leave his two shepherd dogs after his hasty breakfast of cold cereal and the coffee on which he principally lived to drive his old car over the icy roads to the Boys' Club where he spent not only his days but much of the night. His meals were sandwiches and coffee, and the dogs were left in a fenced in yard with kibble rations and an occasional bone. But their love was constant and mutual.

At the end of his final camp season one of Archie's boys had been hospitalized and he insisted on carrying him from the infirmary to the parents' car. It was a long uphill portage and the burden was heavy. I had not known that Archie had a heart condition from a childhood case of rheumatic fever. When camp officially closed that evening, I had no idea Archie was suffering. But next day a call from the hospital in Waterville brought me an alarming report and an urgent request to look after the dogs left in his house.

We found both dogs deserted, hungry and frightened. They were overjoyed to see us, and we took them with us. Both the dogs knew us well. My wife had taken care of Mickey, the younger dog, when he first came as a six-week old puppy. They both adored my wife and were happy in their new home, but kept going to Archie's cabin in camp looking for him.

From this acute heart attack Archie surprisingly rallied. He returned home within the week. Despite warnings of the need for rest and no activity of any kind, Archie immediately resumed

taking part in a campaign his Boys' Club was staging for supporting funds. This I heard when I got an emergency call from the hospital. He had been picked up late at night with a much more serious attack. From this he never rallied.

When I next saw him he knew he would die. His concern was for his dogs. He asked me to take and keep them. This I promised. Archie lingered a few more days. The day and hour of his demise my wife and I were with the dogs and suddenly the older, Robbie lost consciousness, and we had great difficulty in reviving him. Was it a coincidence?

When the time came to close our house on the lake and return to Philadelphia we faced the problem of two big dogs who had roamed the woods all their lives without restraint. They were not house dogs and I feared that I could not let them run the city streets. A desperate solution was to board them for the winter with the lady who had a nice set of cabins for summer guests on a neighboring lake. I knew Louise Nickerson as the wife of the plumber, a handsome likable fellow who not only kept our pumps operating but had installed an ingenious dock system. It consisted of pipe horses set in concrete slabs which rested on the bottom of the lake. The uprights were sleeves of 5/8 inch pipe into which fitted 1/2 inch sections. These had holes and pins so that the height of the dock could be adjusted to changing water level in the pond.

Nickerson, my plumber friend, had installed the plumbing in Louise's cottages when she had come to Maine from New York with her blind husband. Louise had been trained as a concert pianist by her German parents. She met her husband when she gave music instruction and recitals at the "Light House", the social center for the blind in New York City. Nick married her after the blind husband died.

Louise had grown to love shepherd dogs through her blind husband's Seeing Eye guardian. She had known and admired our Robbie and Mickey. At the time we placed the dogs with her both her plumber husband and the Seeing Eye dog had passed out of the picture.

When I returned to Maine the following spring, I found the dogs, despite their excellent care, were still very much our dogs, eager to go with us. Both spent that summer in camp. The boys, many of whom missed their own pets, sometimes apparently more than their brothers or sisters, made much of Robbie and Mickey.

It obviously is not feasible to let children bring their pets to camp. They miss them and to have a dog as a community pet helps a youngster adjust and overcome feelings of homesickness. Our dogs got so much petting they got badly spoiled. Unfortunately, after the end of that camp season, while we and the dogs were enjoying the freedom of the untenanted woods, I had to have Robbie put to sleep. A leg cancer which developed from an early injury progressed to a tragic infirmity, and as no cure was possible release from suffering was indicated.

Mickey missed his comrade and became more firmly attached to Olga, my wife, and more than ever became my shadow. Meanwhile it became impossible to return him to the care of Louise Nickerson for the winter. Reluctantly we decided, now with only one dog, that we would chance taking Mickey home with us. It has proved remarkably successful. He still prefers the freedom of his days in the Maine Woods even as do we. But when the chill winds presage winter's advent, he adjusts to the attraction of city sights and smells and the traditional fireplug.

* * *

Katahdin, this northern peak, beloved by Thoreau, has great memories for me. I led a scouting party of young campers up the Hunt trail, through the eye of the needle and down to an overnite camp on Chimney Pond. It was such a merry happy-go-lucky group, with every mishap a source of laughter. And songs went with us all the way. To me Katahdin is the mountain that stands on tip toe to prove itself tall. There is a pile of rocks some feet high on the summit to make the elevation an even mile over sea level.

I am distressed at what has been happening to take this camping high spot out of the wild lands to make of it a picnic area - Baxter State Park at its foot, now accessible by excellent motor roads. It was not so as I first knew the way in by canoe from the West Branch of the Penobscot or over the tote road from Millinocket. I have the same feeling about the motor road to the top of White Face which dominates Lake Placid in the Adirondacks, or the excellent highway to the top of Cadillac on Mont Desert, Bar Harbor.

For many years we sent a rather large party of the first year Senior campers to spend a week in a setup camp on Lobster Pond. A feature of this excursion into the deep primitive Northern wilderness was the climb of beautiful Spencer. This was a fine test of the strength and courage of these youngsters, and for us a great help in estimating character and potential in our boys.

A real comic interlude was provided by a German refugee doctor the year we had him on our staff. He was the dignified professor. He started the climb encased in a black rubber rain coat to his boot tops. This was to protect him from the mosquitoes, he explained. He also wore dark glasses and carried a lantern. He soon fell behind the single file on the blazed trail, got himself lost, and when found at the end of the day kept plaintively inquiring, "Aber where was dot mountain".

We abandoned this camping trip finally when the way in to Lobster became too difficult. The boat on Moosehead Lake was no longer available to carry people and duffle to Northeast Carry, and the West Branch was so clogged with the logs of the Great Northern Paper Company that our canoes could not get through to Lobster Stream. The last time the trip was attempted it met with near disaster. The boys were led in by following the river along its banks when the loaded canoes could not make it. The camp baggage was supposed to come in by river bateaus but were held up by log jams and failed to arrive. A miserable night added to the misadventure with shelter under overhanging rocks and only hikers' snacks as food until the camp baggage arrived next day. But good leadership saved the day, and it was voted high adventure. How resilient and wonderful is young America!

* * *

Living so intimately over so many years with thousands of children it would seem but natural that I had developed the critical insight into their characters and future potentials and prospects. I cannot claim that this is quite true. If I had rated them at the time they finished their camping years as to "those most likely to succeed" and "those more likely to prove failures" in after life, I think my batting average would be improved by reversing my lists. I have followed the brilliant careers of many of my former campers as doctors, lawyers and other professionals; also there have been captains of industry, financiers, artists of renown, and men who have figured at the top of the entertainment field. We have numbered eminent professors and promoters, and a few have held high office. Curiously enough, only a very limited number of this group made an outstanding record in their school years.

Of course, in the camp community the limelight was focused on the star performer in sports - the tennis champion or the fellow who broke a swimming record. Still it must be noted that it takes courage, ambition, ability and will to learn, and to work hard besides given brawn and good muscular co-relation to achieve outstanding skill in any sport. This should be reflected

in character development and lead to success in life's conflicts and opportunities. I am sure it often so proved itself. Still, I find in review of those men whom I knew as boys and who have had notable careers, that surprizingly few were the outstanding boys of their group in camp.

In quite different perspective, I recall the children who, despite real handicaps or unhappy starts, made good. There was the little boy who was first rejected by his group because of his inability to perform such simple fundamental tasks as making his bed or frying an egg. He was just all thumbs. But he gained stature by reciting in sequence the names of all our presidents and the capital cities of all our states. Then there was the son of a fine surgeon from New Haven who couldn't throw a baseball, but, encouraged by an understanding father, became proficient at tap dancing and was a regular performer on our stage. There was the child who seemed such doubtful camper material that after his first season I debated the wisdom of inviting his return. But he established a niche for himself in our Hall of Fame as a brilliant chess player who created a vogue for this great game and as an ad lib humorist. Recently a boy whom I rated as an inept performer too indifferent to really try in any activity surprised us all by suddenly developing an intense passion for archery, and developing a skill that brought him the championship in final competition.

* * *

At the end of the war, all sorts of war surplus material became available. I secured some prize water equipment, large rubber life rafts which are still the joy of our waterfront. The game of climbing on the black monster's back and bouncing or being shoved off into the water never ends. There were also doughnut floats. But we drew one prize which came consigned from some nameless skipper which I never ordered or bought. One day back in the city I got a wire from my camp caretaker asking what I wanted done with a full sized metal life boat which was sitting on a flat car on a siding at Belgrade Station. It's weight was astronomical, and no cranes were available to unload it or trucks to move it. Somehow my ingenious Yankees devised levers block and tackles, and got hold of an eight wheeler and moved the craft to the open shore of Senior Camp. I found it propped up with blocks when I arrived in Maine. The Seniors found no possible use for this ocean-going craft on a Maine lake, but the leader of the papoose group in the Junior Camp had an idea that it would prove a fine pirate ship if only it could be launched. Senior staff wagered a lobster dinner that Junior staff would never get it off its blocks and into the water without their help. Now the operation assumed proportions of a major sporting event. Loud were the Juniors'

cheers when the boat was inched into the drink and christened with a bottle of pop the "Queen Mary", (after what was then the largest liner afloat).

The Queen came fully equipped with sweep oars, a mast and sails, water casks, lockers, flares and emergency gadgets.

A pirate crew boarded her and under the Jolly Rodger the ship made a number of cruises around the lake that summer. She would proceed slowly and stately under sail if the wind was on her tail, otherwise by relays of galley slaves manning the sweeps. A stop for lunch was made at a beach and, after a siesta on deck, a swim. Then any of the crew convicted of high crimes and misdemeanors would be made to walk the plank blindfold. This took courage, but with proper adult supervision was never fatal.

This was unfortunately the one and only season that Mary cruised. It was almost as difficult an operation to get her back on shore and berthed for the winter as it had been to launch her. So there was little enthusiasm to get her back into the water. For a number of years she was a point of interest on the Junior shore. Eventually I sold her for \$25, to be used on another lake as a lumber barge.

* * *

Much has been written in truth and jest of the size and bite of the mosquitoes of Alaska or the Jersey coast, but for real discomfort I doubt if they equal the tiny poisonous black fly of our Northern Woods - When the ice of lake and stream goes out, and fishing is at its best, these swarming pests can drive the most enthusiastic devotee running for cover. Nets and dopes help a lot, but the persistent fly will find the weak spot in the armour. Fortunately the worst of this pest is past by the time our Summer Camps start. But then comes the mosquito freshly hatched from larva wherever spring rains have left a puddle.

Take a child fresh from its air-conditioned bug-proof city dwelling, a bit strange in the new world of camp, let him fight a buzzing lot of hungry insects through his first long night and you have the makings of a case of real homesickness.

This I had very much in mind when I built cabins and living quarters by providing what I thought would be adequate screening. To my dismay, my cabins not only were not bug free, they actually were mosquito traps. The bugs did not come through the screens, they entered through the cracks of the loose fitting floor boards and openings where green board sheathing had shrunken. A

linoleum floor cover and some chinking provided temporary but expensive relief - Now all our floors are double and tight. A good hard wood fitted floor in all buildings pays off. It helps keep floors clean and prevents checking and splinters.

But even so the frequent opening and closing of screen doors will let in the enemy which is most active as the sun goes down. That is the very time the campers are in and out of their cabins. So one of the cabin masters' scheduled routine jobs is to spray his cabin when the children have reported in for the night. Some of the new repellent sprays are really effective. I would caution against leaving the spray guns in the hands of even quite mature campers, however. The temptation to mistake a comrade for a bug can be irresistible, and the fog spray is very irritating to eyes and sensitive membranes.

The problem of protecting sleeping campers in tents has been met by including a mosquito canopy to fit over the cot in every outfit. First, camp supplied them, and they were laundered and mended at the end of the season. But campers soon learned to take them along on their trips in the woods. What happened to them there, plus abuse in camp, convinced me that a season's use was par for the course.

The nets were pinned by the tapes at the four corners to the roof of the tent, and when, as in the beginning, giant blanket pins were used, caused extensive damage to the canvas. Now we issue reasonably sized safety pins and our tents are equipped with tape loops.

An experienced trip leader will try to select a wind swept point when the bugs are biting for his overnight. But it is not possible to escape the pests in the woods. Altho a smudge may help, it can never do the job the less romantic but more efficient repellent bombs accomplish. Nor will these take the place of mosquito bars erected on forked sticks over sleeping bags.

Some of the well known and aggressive companies selling chemicals, detergents and sprays recommend area bug spraying. They even furnish devices to blanket the camps at stated intervals with insect lethal mist. Also they sell residual sprays for the buildings. Undoubtedly there exist exceptional instances where this is justified. Also where outdoor meetings, campfires, or theatricals are held after the sun goes down they will hold audience attention which otherwise might turn into a slapping chorus. Our own well equipped stage faces a natural amphitheater with concrete benches and a canvas roof. The sides are open and delightfully breezy. But when the flood lights were on, it became a dance hall for the

winged pests. Mist spraying performed wonders. But before the season was half over a nasty fetid odor was noticeable. Investigation by the sanitary squad blamed it on the repeated spraying which had impregnated the earth between the benches. A wrong spray also had been used, one intended for stable use only.

There is a very tragic side to all outdoor spraying. The lethal effect is not confined to the insects of the area; bird life is also eliminated with much damage to all the wild inhabitants. After even very limited and restricted spraying I have found many dead birds, and practically all nestlings perish either from hunger, as parents cannot find bugs to bring to the nest, or from the paralyzing affect of the spray with which they have come in contact. As we camp people are conservation minded I feel we should resist the siren call of the makers of chemical sprays and limit their use to where their is real need.

* * *

Although I am still able to climb the steep hill from the lake to the Junior Camp cabins, many times a day, with out loss of breath, we are none of us immortal. My two successors, Uncle Hart and Uncle Harry are well prepared and competent to assure the future of Kennebec. I am happy to still retain my small interest and to spend my summers as a member of the camp community. At first it was difficult to sit back, exercise restraint when decisions were being made and to no longer preside at Grand Council as Sachem. But I really have found I now have more time to spend with the boys and in activities and my interest in camping continues as keen as in the first years I spent on Salmon Lake.

During the life time that I have spent in organized camping I have seen ever so many camps come and go. They have included both camps for boys and for girls and coeducational, private and institutional; camps with special objectives and programs. I have seen fine and successful camps diminish and disintegrate. Some have then passed into new hands and have had a rebirth. Some camps, especially those connected with some Youth organization, have varied from good to bad and back again. Now there is no question in my mind that the reason behind success or failure lies in the quality of the leadership it has had. Parents considering the choice of a camp have often asked, "But after all aren't all camps just about the same - so many weeks of outdoor play?" And the answer is "Yes, as to externals". There is the same general more or less primitive living, community activity, attention to land and water sports with remarkably little variation at comparative price levels.

That tells only the superficial story. For, as water will not rise above its own level so the character training, the art of living,

the skills acquired will be a direct response to the quality of leadership and inspiration which will always distinguish the good and successful camp. As camp leadership and direction becomes recognized as a profession and not a business it will acquire stature, and call for both high qualifications and adequate training and preparation.